

From: Erik Burd
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 12:24pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

The settlement with Microsoft shouldn't be allowed. It will not remedy the core problem of Microsoft's unethical and anticompetitive business practices. The only thing it will do is extend their monopoly into schools, which the last place any real competition really exists.

Microsoft won't care a bit, as it will do nothing more than get more people using their products, who would most likely be buying their software. I see this as a big bribe offered by someone with a lot of cash burning a hole in their wallet, as they have nothing better to do with a whopping \$35 billion. It's like a police officer accepting a payoff from the mob or crime ring to look the other way.

What really needs to be done is to level the playing field and allow small companies to compete in the marketplace. Many companies have been shut out of the market by Microsoft's product bundling with Windows. These small companies are the real innovators, and they are the companies that must be allowed to exist. Otherwise, we will all lose the innovation that's required for us to make the next big step forward. Microsoft couldn't come up with an original innovation if its existence depended on it.

I was extremely disappointed with the DOJ, as they snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. I'm happy that the nine states are going ahead on their own lawsuit to set things straight. I hope something does happen, but I have some doubts in the back of my mind. A very strong action must be taken, or Microsoft will only continue with their monopoly.

My thoughts on restoring competition:

- 1) Remove all bundling of Internet Explorer from all versions of Windows. Make it an optional download.
- 2) Additionally, remove any tying in of their other products (Windows Media Player, etc.) to Windows. There was a recent security bug in Internet Explorer which was fixed, ironically, by updating Windows Media Player. Make them optional downloads, too.
- 3) Punish Microsoft for their anticompetitive behavior, and hard
- 4) Ensure that small startup companies are allowed to innovate and create the next generation of software, without being bullied around by Microsoft.
- 5) Create a marketplace that will allow the computer users to determine who has the best product.
- 6) Take strong steps to protect competition.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

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